

### REMARKS

Claims 1 - 28 are pending in the application. Claims 12 - 19 are allowed. Claims 1, 2, 20 and 21 are rejected. Claims 3 - 11 and 22 - 28 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. No claim has been amended, canceled or added. For the reasons discussed below, Applicant respectfully requests for allowance of claims 1 - 11 and 20 - 28 as well.

### The Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,923,193 to Bloch et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Bloch"). Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's position for the following reasons.

The independent claim 1 is directed to a signal synchronizing circuit for prohibiting signals traveling from a first clock domain operating with a first clock to a second clock domain operating with a second clock when the first clock is not active. The signal synchronizing circuit includes a detection circuit producing a detection signal indicating that the first clock is active, and at least one output selection module for passing a selected signal from the first clock domain to the second clock domain only when the first clock is active.

In the telephonic interview, the Examiner indicated that Bloch anticipates the independent claim 1. The Examiner, with reference to FIG. 1 of Bloch, thought that the combination of the digital data storage element 160 and the data value retention

element 170 is equivalent to the output selection module of the claimed invention. The Examiner asserted that the clock A and the signal DATA2 as shown in FIG. 1 are equivalents to the detection signal and the selected signal of the claim 1, respectively. The assertion was based on the contention that the state of clock A determines whether or not the retention element 170 can pass DATA2 from the storage element 160 to the storage element 180 (see FIG. 1).

Applicant respectfully disagrees with this assertion. The output of the retention element 170 is not responsive to clock A. The storage element 160 is a flip-flop that samples DATA2 based on clock A (see col.6 lines 34 - 41). The retention element 170 is a latch that retains a signal value output from the storage element 160 (see col. 6, lines 24 - 30). Although clock A may be in a current state that prevents the storage element 160 from outputting any signal, the retention element 170 can still retain a signal value that was output from the storage element 160 prior to the clock A's current state. In fact, it is the signal C, not signal A, that can trigger the retention element 170 to pass the retained signal value to the storage element 180 (col. 6, lines 2-8). In other words, the state of clock A does not determine whether or not the retention element 170 can pass DATA2 from the storage element 160 to the storage element 180. Thus, clock A is not equivalent, in function or form, to the detection signal of the claim 1. As such, Bloch fails to teach a detection circuit producing a detection signal indicating that the first clock is active; and at least one output selection module for passing the selected signal from the first clock domain to the second clock domain only when the first clock is active. The claimed invention is fundamentally different from Bloch, and it is not appropriate to cite Bloch as a 102 prior art reference to reject the claimed invention as

represented by the claim 1. Accordingly, the rejection based on Bloch should be withdrawn. Moreover, as claims 2 - 11 depend on the independent claim 1, they are also patentable over Bloch.


Claim 20 is directed to a method that includes a step of detecting that the first clock operating in the first clock domain is active. For the same reasons discussed above, claim 20 is not anticipated by Bloch. Accordingly, claims 21 - 28 depending on the independent claim 20 are patentable over Bloch as well.

**CONCLUSION**

Applicant has made an earnest attempt to place this application in an allowable form. In view of the foregoing remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the pending claims are drawn to a novel subject matter, patentably distinguishable over the prior art of record. The Examiner is therefore, respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the outstanding rejections.

Should the Examiner deem that any further clarification is desirable, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

By:   
Howard Chen  
Attorney for Applicant  
Registration No. 46,615

Preston Gates & Ellis LLP  
55 Second Street, Suite 1700  
San Francisco, CA 94105-3493  
Telephone: (415) 882-8029  
Facsimile: (415) 882-8220